



**PO Box 278 • Sagaponack, NY 11962 • (631) 899-3441 • [www.olaofeasternlongisland.org](http://www.olaofeasternlongisland.org)**

As the effects of the COVID-19 virus continue to be felt on every level of life across Long Island we are seeing an increasing number of individuals struggling to make rental payments in our community. Pursuant to Executive Order 202.8 there is currently a 90 day moratorium on evictions in New York State.

While we are optimistic that this will make a meaningful difference for New Yorkers, we are also alarmed by first-hand accounts reporting that in some cases, landlords and/or middlemen have ignored this moratorium, taken the law into their own hands and locked out tenants from their home.

As you are no doubt aware locking out tenants for any reason without a Court Order is illegal and classified as a criminal misdemeanor. To prevent further confusion and critically further lockouts, we ask:

- That the Town/Village communicate to the public that lock-outs are illegal even in situations where a tenant has not paid their rent and reassure the public that the Town/Village will not tolerate unlawful evictions,
- That the Chief of Police be made aware of this situation,
- In order not to overwhelm the emergency line with these issues, that a method of communication be developed so that police can respond urgently to situations where individuals have been locked out of their homes.



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### **COVID-19: Evictions Information**

On March 20, 2020 Governor Cuomo issued a 90-day moratorium on all evictions. No evictions can occur within the State of New York until at least June 19, 2020. You have rights as a tenant and should be aware of the rights and protections that exist under the law.

**Q: What if I had a court date for an eviction proceeding?**

A: All court dates have been adjourned until May at the earliest. If you would like to check the status of a court date you can do so by calling Southampton Justice Court at (631) 702-2990. No matter what your court date is though, you cannot be evicted before June 19, 2020.

**Q: What if I already received notification from the Sheriff's Office that I am being evicted?**

A: Even if you received a 14-day notice from the Sheriff, you will not be evicted until at least June 19, 2020.

**Q: What if I am unable to pay my rent because I am currently out of work?**

A: Many families are facing difficult choices because of current situation. Even though evictions are suspended, your rent is still due. You can contact Suffolk County Department of Social Services at (631) 854-9100 to see if you may be eligible for emergency assistance. If you cannot pay your rent, your landlord will not be able to start an eviction proceeding until the courts re-open, and will not be able to complete an eviction until at least June 19, 2020.

**Q: My landlord has threatened to change my locks or shut off my utilities. What can I do?**

A: In N.Y. it is a crime for a landlord to lock someone out of their home, or to turn off the utilities or remove someone's property to force them out. The only legal evictions are conducted by the Sheriff's Office and the Sheriff is not conducting evictions until June 2020. If you have been illegally evicted, call the police immediately. For additional assistance you can also contact Nassau Suffolk Law Services at (631) 232-2400.

**Q: My apartment is unsafe because the owner refuses to correct problems or address maintenance issues. What can I do?**

A: The Department of Health will still take reports about serious living condition issues. You can call (631) 854-4000 or contact Southampton Town Code Enforcement at (631) 702-1700.

For additional information and more details visit <https://www.nslawservices.org/covid-19>.

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